

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The subcommittee did not hold formal hearings for the Government Printing Office and the Office of Compliance. Following are the statements submitted by them and the answers to questions submitted to them by the subcommittee:]

DEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVITA VANCE-COOKS, PUBLIC PRINTER

Chairwoman Shaheen, Ranking Member Hoeven, and Members of the Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, I have the honor to submit the appropriations request of the Government Printing Office (GPO) for fiscal year 2015. As background, my prepared statement provides an overview of GPO's functions and operations.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

The Government Printing Office (GPO) is the OFFICIAL, DIGITAL, SECURE resource for producing, procuring, cataloging, indexing, authenticating, disseminating, and preserving the official information products of the Federal Government.

Under title 44 of the U.S. Code, GPO is responsible for the production and distribution of information products for all three branches of the Government, including the official publications of Congress and the White House, U.S. passports for the Department of State, and the official publications of other Federal agencies and the courts. Once primarily a printing operation, we are now an integrated publishing operation and carry out our mission using an expanding range of digital as well as conventional formats. Total GPO employment today is 1,879.

Along with sales of publications in digital and tangible formats to the public, GPO supports openness and transparency in Government by providing permanent public access to Federal Government information at no charge through our Federal Digital System (FDsys, at www.fdsys.gov), which today makes nearly one million Federal titles available online from both GPO's servers and links to servers in other agencies, and in 2013 averaged 38.7 million downloads per month (with a spike up to 47.5 million retrievals during the recent Government shutdown). There have been over 1 billion retrievals from this system since it replaced our original Web site, *GPO Access*. We also provide public access to Government information through partnerships with approximately 1,200 libraries nationwide participating in the Federal Depository Library Program.

In addition to GPO's Web site, www.gpo.gov, we communicate with the public routinely via Twitter twitter.com/USGPO, YouTube youtube.com/user/gpoprinter, Facebook facebook.com/USGPO, our Government Book Blog govbooktalk.gpo.gov, and most recently Pinterest <http://pinterest.com/usgpo/>.

History.—From the Mayflower Compact to the Declaration of Independence and the papers leading to the creation and ratification of the Constitution, America is a nation based on documents, and our governmental tradition since then has reflected that fact. Article I, section 5 of the Constitution requires that “each House shall keep a journal of its proceedings and from time to time publish the same.”

After years of struggling with various systems of contracting for printed documents that were beset with scandal and corruption, in 1860 Congress created the Government Printing Office as its official printer. GPO first opened its doors for business on March 4, 1861, the same day Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as the 16th President.

Since that time, GPO has produced and distributed the official version of every great American state paper—and an uncounted number of other Government publications, documents, and forms—including the Emancipation Proclamation, the legislative publications and acts of Congress, Social Security cards, Medicare and Medicaid information, census forms, tax forms, citizenship forms, passports, military histories ranging from the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* to the latest accounts of our forces in Afghanistan, the *9/11 Commission Report*, Presidential inaugural addresses, and Supreme Court opinions. This work goes on today, in both digital and print forms.

Strategic Vision and Plan.—GPO is transforming from a print-centric to a content-centric publishing operation. In fiscal year 2015 and the years ahead, GPO will continue to develop an integrated, diversified product and services portfolio that primarily focuses on digital. Although industry experts predict tangible print will continue to be required because of official use, archival purposes, authenticity, specific industry requirements, and segments of the population that either have limited or no access to digital formats, we recognize that the volume of tangible print that is requisitioned from GPO will continue to decline.

Our 5-year strategic plan, 2014–2018, which is available for public review at www.gpo.gov/about/, is built around four continuing strategic goals: satisfying our stakeholders, offering products and services, strengthening our organizational foundation, and engaging our workforce. The plan provides the blueprint for how GPO will continue to achieve its mission of *Keeping America Informed* with an emphasis on being OFFICIAL, DIGITAL, SECURE. GPO's senior managers convene at the beginning of the fiscal year to review the plan and approve it before it is issued.

Technology Transformation.—GPO has continually transformed itself throughout its history by adapting to changing technologies. In the ink-on-paper era, this meant moving from hand-set to machine typesetting, from slower to high-speed presses, and from hand to automated bookbinding. These changes were significant for their time.

Yet they pale by comparison with the transformation that accompanied our incorporation of electronic information technologies, which began over 50 years ago in 1962 when the Joint Committee on Printing directed the agency to develop a new system of computer-based composition. That order led to the development of GPO's first electronic photocomposition system, which by the early 1980's had completely supplanted machine-based hot metal typesetting. Following the enactment of the GPO Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act in 1993, the databases generated by our composition system were uploaded to the Internet via GPO's first Web site, *GPO Access*, vastly expanding the agency's information dissemination capabilities. Those functions continue today with FDsys on a more complex and comprehensive scale.

As a result of these sweeping technology changes, GPO is now fundamentally different from what it was as recently as a generation ago: smaller, leaner, and equipped with digital production capabilities that are the bedrock of the information systems relied upon daily by Congress, Federal agencies, and the public to ensure open and transparent Government in the digital era. As we prepare GPO for the Government information environment and technology challenges of the future, our transformation is continuing with the development of new ways of delivering Government information, including apps and bulk data download files.

GPO AND CONGRESS

For the Clerk of the House, the Secretary of the Senate, and the committees of the House and the Senate, GPO produces the documents and publications required by the legislative and oversight processes of Congress. This includes the daily *Congressional Record*, bills, reports, legislative calendars, hearings, committee prints, and documents, as well as stationery, franked envelopes, memorials and condolence books, programs and invitations, phone books, and the other products needed to conduct the legislative business of Congress. We also detail expert staff to support the publishing requirements of House and Senate committees and congressional offices such as the House and Senate Offices of Legislative Counsel. We work with Congress to ensure the provision of these services under any circumstances through continuity-of-operations (COOP) planning.

Today the activities associated with creating congressional information databases comprise the vast majority of the work funded by our annual Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation. In addition to using these databases to produce printed products as required by Congress, GPO makes them available to the Internet via FDsys, and they are the source of the apps we build for congressional information. Our advanced digital authentication system, supported by public key infrastructure (PKI), is an essential component for assuring the digital security of congressional documents.

GPO's congressional information systems also form the building blocks of other information systems supporting Congress. Our congressional information databases are provided directly to the Library of Congress to support its new Congress.gov system as well as the legislative information systems the Library makes available to House and Senate offices. We are collaborating with the Library on the digitization of previously printed documents, such as the *Congressional Record* dating from 1873 to 1998, to make them more broadly available to Congress and the public.

GPO Cuts the Cost of Congressional Work.—The use of electronic information technologies by GPO has been a principal contributor to lowering the cost, in real economic terms, of congressional information products. In fiscal year 1980, as we began replacing hot metal typesetting with electronic photocomposition, the appropriation for our Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation was \$91.6 million, the equivalent in today's dollars of \$259 million. By comparison, our approved funding for fiscal year 2014 is \$79.7 million, a reduction of more than two-thirds in constant dollar terms.

Productivity increases resulting from technology have enabled us to make substantial reductions in staffing requirements while continuing to improve services for Congress. In 1980, GPO employment was 6,450. Today, we have 1,879 employees on board, representing a reduction of 4,571, or more than 70 percent. This is the smallest GPO workforce of any time in the past century.

Highlights of Fiscal Year 2013 Congressional Work.—In 2013, we released a version of the 113th Congress Mobile Member Guide app, which contains data equivalent to the *Congressional Pictorial Directory*, with further updates to be completed this year.

At the direction of the House Appropriations Committee, and in support of the House's task force on bulk data, in 2013 we worked with the Library of Congress to make House bill summaries prepared by the Congressional Research Service available in XML bulk data format, from the beginning of the 113th Congress. This follows the work we have done to make House bills available in XML bulk data format, beginning with the 113th Congress.

On September 17, 2013, Constitution Day, GPO and the Library of Congress jointly announced the results of a project to produce and update the *Constitution Annotated*, via the Web, an app, and a new print version. The 2013 edition marks the centennial of this highly regarded publication, which now is more broadly accessible than ever, with a new schedule for digital updates as Supreme Court decisions are announced.

The 2013 Presidential inauguration included the work GPO provided under the direction of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies. We designed and produced approximately 80 different products for the event, including invitations, tickets, signs, pins, and other items that supported the organization and conduct of the inaugural ceremonies. We also produced secure credentials for the event at the request of the U.S. Capitol Police, as we did for the 2009 Presidential inauguration.

GPO AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

Federal agencies are major generators of information in the United States, and GPO produces their information products for official use and public access. Federal agencies and the public also rely on a growing variety of secure credentials produced by GPO, including travelers holding U.S. passports, Medicare beneficiaries in Puerto Rico, and other users. Our digital systems support key Federal agency publications, including the annual *Budget of the U.S. Government* and, most importantly, the *Federal Register* and associated products. As it does for congressional documents, our digital authentication system, supported by public key infrastructure (PKI), assures the digital security of agency documents. GPO does not receive appropriations to produce work for Federal agencies. Instead, we provide products and services on a reimbursable basis.

Highlights of Fiscal Year 2013 Agency Operations.—For the past 2 years we have made the *Budget of the U.S. Government* available as a mobile app. In 2013, the

fiscal year 2014 *Budget* on FDsys had nearly 122,000 users in the first few days of availability, and our mobile Web app had approximately 62,000 users.

One of GPO's major agency customers is the Office of the Federal Register (OFR), which produces the daily *Federal Register* and related publications such as the *Code of Federal Regulations*, and other key information products like the *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents* and the *Public Papers of the President*. GPO produces these publications in both digital and print formats.

A major document that GPO produces is the U.S. passport for the Department of State, which we have been responsible for since 1926. At one time no more than a conventionally printed document, the U.S. passport since 2005 has incorporated a digital chip and antenna array capable of carrying biometric identification data. With other security printing features, this document—which we produce in Washington, DC, as well as a secure remote facility in Mississippi—is now the most secure identification credential obtainable. In 2013, we began work on development of the next generation passport, a project that we now have underway.

Since 2008, we have served as an integrator of secure identification smart cards to support the credentialing requirements of Federal agencies and other Government entities. Our secure credential unit has been certified by the General Services Administration (GSA) as the only government-to-government provider of credentials meeting the requirements of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12). In 2013, following the approval of the Joint Committee on Printing, we completed the installation of a COOP facility for card production at our facility in Mississippi on time and under budget, and began operations.

Partnership with Industry.—Other than congressional and other work such as the *Federal Register*, the *Budget*, and secure and intelligent documents, we produce virtually all other Federal agency information product requirements via contracts in partnership with the private sector printing and information product industry. In fiscal year 2013 this work amounted to about \$300 million. Approximately 16,000 individual firms are registered to do business with GPO, the vast majority of whom are small businesses averaging 20 employees per firm. Contracts are awarded on a purely competitive basis; there are no set-asides or preferences in contracting other than what is specified in law and regulation, including a requirement for Buy American. This partnership provides great economic opportunity for the private sector.

GPO AND OPEN, TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT

Producing and distributing the official publications and information products of the Government fulfills an informing role originally envisioned by the Founders, as James Madison once said:

A popular Government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy, or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.

GPO operates a variety of programs that provide the public with “the means of acquiring” Government information that Madison spoke of. These include the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), GPO's Federal Digital System (FDsys), our Publications and Information Sales and Reimbursable Distribution programs, and social media.

Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).—The FDLP has legislative antecedents that date back 200 years, to 1813. Across those years, depository libraries have served as critical links between “We the People” and the information made available by the Federal Government. GPO provides the libraries with information products in digital and, in some cases, tangible formats, and the libraries in turn make these available to the public at no charge while providing additional help and assistance to depository library users. The program today serves millions of Americans through a network of approximately 1,200 public, academic, law, and other libraries located across the Nation, averaging nearly three per congressional district. Once limited to the distribution of printed and microfiche products, the FDLP today is primarily digital, supported by FDsys and other digital resources.

Federal Digital System (FDsys).—GPO has been providing online access to congressional and Federal agency documents since 1994, under the requirement of chapter 41 of title 44, U.S.C. Today, FDsys provides the majority of congressional and Federal agency content to the FDLP as well as other online users. This system has reduced the cost of providing public access to Government information significantly when compared with print, while expanding public access dramatically

through the Internet. Currently, FDsys serves as a secure preservation repository for nearly one million individual titles from all three branches of the Government, the only system of its kind in operation today. Public utilization of FDsys has increased substantially. In 2013, FDsys averaged 38.7 million downloads per month, with a spike up to 47.5 million retrievals during the recent Government shutdown. Earlier this year, we reported there have been more than 1 billion documents retrieved from FDsys since it replaced our original Web site, *GPO Access*. GPO is continually adding collections to FDsys to provide increased public access to Government information.

GPO Achieves Savings in Information Dissemination.—In 1995, the first full year of our online operations, the cost of printing and distributing millions of copies of printed publications to Federal depository libraries nationwide was funded at \$17.6 million, the equivalent of \$26.9 million in constant dollars. For fiscal year 2015, we are proposing to fund this function at \$8.7 million, a reduction of more than 67 percent in constant dollar terms. Along with appropriations to GPO's Revolving Fund, we have used the savings from reduced printing and distribution costs to pay for the establishment and operation of our digital information dissemination operations, achieving additional savings for the taxpayers, and vastly expanding public access to Government information.

Publication and Information Sales Program.—Along with the FDLDP and FDsys, which are no-fee public access programs, GPO provides public access to official Federal information through public sales featuring secure ordering through an online bookstore, a brick and mortar bookstore at GPO headquarters in Washington, DC, and partnerships with the private sector that offer Federal publications as eBooks. As a one-stop shop for eBook design, conversion, and dissemination, our presence in the eBook market continues to grow. We now have agreements with Apple, Google's eBookstore, Barnes & Noble, OverDrive, Ingram, Zinio, and other online vendors to make popular Government titles such as the *Financial Crisis Inquiry Report* available as eBooks. We have made *Women in Congress* and *Black Americans in Congress* available as eBooks and we are working on making *Hispanic Americans in Congress* available as an eBook as well.

Reimbursable Distribution Program.—We operate distribution programs for the information products of other Federal agencies on a reimbursable basis, including Consumer Information Center publications of the General Services Administration (GSA), from warehouses in Pueblo, CO, and Laurel, MD.

GPO and Social Media.—We use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and a book blog to share information about GPO news and events and to promote specific publications and products. By the end of 2013, we had 2,731 likes on Facebook, 5,000 followers on Twitter, and 93,705 views across nearly 53 videos on YouTube. Our book blog, Government Book Talk, focuses on increasing the awareness of new and classic Federal publications through reviews and discussions. In February 2013, we started up a presence on Pinterest and now have 288 followers pinning on 15 boards of Federal Government information.

GPO'S FINANCES

Revolving Fund.—All GPO activities are financed through a business-like Revolving Fund. The fund is used to pay all of GPO's costs in performing congressional and agency printing and publishing, printing procurement, and distribution activities. It is reimbursed from payments from customer agencies, sales to the public, and transfers from GPO's two annual appropriations: the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation and the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents. Our appropriations constitute approximately 15 percent of our total revenues.

Appropriated Funds.—GPO's Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation is used to reimburse the Revolving Fund for costs of publishing the documents required for the use of Congress in digital and print formats. The Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents is used to pay for costs associated with depository distribution, cataloging and indexing, statutory distribution, and international exchange distribution. The reimbursements from these appropriations are included in GPO's Revolving Fund as revenue for work performed.

Fiscal Year 2013 Financial Results.—Revenue totaled \$719 million while total expenses were \$689 million. The expenses include a \$1.4 million beneficial adjustment reflecting a decrease in the GPO long term liability for workers' compensation. Before that adjustment and net of the accumulation of \$20.7 million in reimbursements from the State Department reserved for capital investment supporting passport production, GPO's operating net income was \$7.3 million. Our financial state-

ments are audited annually by an independent third party contracted for by our Office of Inspector General, and we routinely receive an unqualified or “clean” opinion.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

We are requesting a total of \$128,919,000 for fiscal year 2015, an increase of \$9,619,000 or 8.1 percent over the level of funding provided for fiscal year 2014 in Public Law 113–76. The increase is primarily attributable to the Congressional Printing and Binding account due to the currently projected reduction in the availability of unexpended prior year funds to offset new funding requirements. The other significant component of our increased request is for support of GPO’s Federal Digital System (FDsys) and our Composition System Replacement project as well as necessary facilities maintenance and repairs.

GPO’s appropriations request for fiscal year 2015 will enable us to:

- meet projected requirements for GPO’s congressional printing and binding operations;

- fund the operation of GPO’s statutory information dissemination programs and provide investment funds for necessary information dissemination projects; and
- continue the development of FDsys and GPO’s Composition System Replacement project and carry out necessary facilities maintenance and repair projects.

Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation.—We are requesting \$85,400,000 for this account. This represents an increase of \$5,664,000 or 7.1 percent over the level approved in Public Law 113–76. Rather than representing an increase in congressional product requirements, the increase is due primarily to the reduced availability of unexpended prior year funds to offset new funding requirements.

For fiscal year 2014, we estimated that total congressional printing and binding requirements would be \$89,487,000. We plan to use \$9,751,000 of transfers from the unexpended balances of prior year appropriations to help offset these requirements. This reduced our need for new funding to \$79,736,000, the level that has been approved for fiscal year 2014.

For fiscal year 2015, we estimate that total congressional printing and binding requirements will be \$90,713,000, an increase of just \$1,226,000 or 1.4 percent, which is a third less than the anticipated 2.1 percent inflation increase. At this time, we plan to use \$5,313,000 that is available in unexpended prior funds to offset these requirements, resulting in our request for \$85,400,000 in new funding. We are continuing to monitor the liquidation of outstanding obligations against our prior year accounts, and should additional prior year unexpended balances become available, we will request their transfer for fiscal year 2015 purposes.

The estimated requirements for fiscal year 2015 include a projected price level increase of \$1,895,000, based on an average 2.1 percent rise in printing costs. The effects of the price level increase are offset by an estimated \$669,000 reduction in volume requirements. The volume estimate is derived from historical data. While volume is projected to increase for hearings, miscellaneous printing and services, bills and resolutions, and the *Congressional Record Index*, volume reductions are projected for all other congressional printing and binding categories, chiefly in the categories for the *Congressional Record*, legislative calendars, document envelopes and franks, miscellaneous publications, and committee prints.

Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents.—We are requesting \$32,171,000 for this account. This represents an increase of \$671,000 or 2.1 percent over the funding approved in Public Law 113–76.

The funding we are requesting for fiscal year 2015 will cover mandatory pay and related cost increases of \$271,000. Merit and other pay increases are included for 94 FTE’s, a reduction of 20 from the level requested for fiscal year 2014. In addition, the requested funding covers projected price level increases of \$400,000, including ongoing systems maintenance and FDsys operating expenses.

Our total requirements for this account for fiscal year 2015 are projected to be \$37,238,000. This includes \$2,500,000 for the development of metadata for the digitized bound *Congressional Record* and *Federal Register*; \$1,067,000 for the FDLP’s digital harvesting and content management project; \$1,000,000 for the historic shelflist digitization project; and \$500,000 in projects to enhance public access to Web-based publications. To cover these costs, there is approximately \$5,067,000 in unexpended balances from prior year accounts. We will request the Appropriations Committees for authority to transfer these funds to the Revolving Fund to cover these project costs.

Revolving Fund.—We are requesting \$11,347,500 for this account, to remain available until expended. This represents an increase of \$3,284,000 or 40.7 percent over the funding provided in Public Law 113–76.

The request includes \$5,331,500 for FDsys projects, including \$3,800,000 for repository development, search development, and Web app and processing development, to maintain consistent delivery of new features and functionality associated with the introduction of the next generation FDsys, scheduled for fiscal year 2015. In addition, we are requesting \$1,531,500 for FDsys infrastructure improvements including test environment, development environment, storage upgrade, and additional bandwidth to accommodate continuing increases in public use. The recent report of the National Academy of Public Administration on GPO discussed the need for appropriations to provide necessary funding for FDsys.

GPO has been working on the development of our XML-based Composition System Replacement (CSR) project, which will replace our aging Microcomp composition system. The objective of the project is to match the typographical style and page layout of current printed publications, as well as support enhanced search, retrieval, data formats, and repurposing of data. In fiscal year 2015, GPO plans to continue active development of core legislative documents, beginning with bills, resolutions, and amendments but also efforts to migrate additional publications to XML. We are requesting \$3.5 million for this purpose, which will cover the costs for hardware, software, and staffing needed for project support, development and implementation.

We are also requesting \$2,516,000 for facilities projects, including replacement of aging elevators and continuing repairs to our roof, acquisition of a new automated utility management system, and projects to install upgraded volt transformers, design of a “free cooling” heat exchange system, installation of an air compressor, and a new cooling system for GPO’s data center.

Chairwoman Shaheen, Ranking Member Hoeven, this concludes my prepared statement and I am prepared to answer any questions you may have.

[The following are answers to questions submitted by the subcommittee to the Government Printing Office:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO DAVITA VANCE-COOKS

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATORS JEANNE SHAHEEN AND JOHN HOEVEN

CONGRESSIONAL PRINTING AND BINDING

Question. The total request for GPO’s congressional printing and binding for fiscal year 2015 is \$85.4 million, an increase of \$5.664 million, or 6.9 percent, to the 2014 level. In addition to the appropriations request, GPO plans to utilize \$5.313 million of unexpended prior year funds to offset further congressional printing and binding needs in fiscal year 2015.

What is the original source of the \$5.313 million in unexpended prior year appropriations, and why has it not yet been expended?

Answer. The original source of the \$5.313 million in unexpended prior year appropriations was from fiscal years 2009 through 2011. These funds were not expended because congressional workload was less than had been estimated. Each year during the budget development process, GPO projects congressional workload requirements based primarily on analysis of historical data. However, GPO does not control actual workload demands, and as a result actual workload can be lower or higher than estimated.

Question. Why does the appropriations request for congressional printing and binding increase by such a relatively large percentage between fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015?

Answer. GPO is seeking funding of \$85.4 million dollars for Congressional Printing and Binding. This is an increase of \$5.7 million or 7.1 percent over the current funding level. This increase is due primarily to the reduced availability of unexpended prior year funds. Congressional Printing and Binding overall workload is projected to decrease. The net increase is composed of the following:

- A \$0.7 million decrease due to an overall reductions in workload;
- A \$1.9 million increase for price level and pay increases; and
- A \$4.4 million increase due to a reduction in funds available for transfer to meet program requirements in fiscal year 2015, compared to fiscal year 2014.

Congressional Printing and Binding program requirements are projected to be \$90.7 million for fiscal year 2015, before the transfer of funds, compared to \$89.5 million in fiscal year 2014, before the transfer of funds. This represents an increase of \$1.2 million over fiscal year 2014, which is less than the rate of inflation. Funding from transfers of prior-year surplus appropriations is expected to offset \$5.3 million in program expenses in fiscal year 2015, compared with the \$9.7 million in prior year funds that was available for fiscal year 2014.

GPO is continuing to evaluate prior year open obligations to determine whether additional unexpended balances may be available for transfer to the Revolving Fund to help meet our fiscal year 2015 appropriations requirements. [As of May 5, 2014, GPO had identified an additional \$2,232,000 in unexpended prior year funds that could be applied to its request for funding for Congressional Printing and Binding for fiscal year 2015.]

COMPOSITION SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

Question. GPO's fiscal year 2015 request includes \$3.5 million for the Composition System Replacement project.

Why does GPO need to replace the current composition system?

Answer. GPO's current composition system is based on a 30-year-old batch composition engine, developed and maintained by GPO, called Microcomp, which is still being used to compose the majority of congressional documents and select Federal agency publications that are printed and published electronically by GPO. GPO has decided to replace Microcomp and move GPO to a composition system based on Extensible Markup Language (XML), which is the legislative data standard that has been adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Composition System Replacement (CSR) is intended to:

- Replace GPO's current system used to compose congressional and regulatory documents for printing (Microcomp);
- Move GPO to a composition model that is content centric and based on XML;
- Match the typographical style and page layout of current printed publications as well as support enhanced features for digital and mobile display, including search, retrieval, and repurposing of data;
- Be implemented incrementally on a product by product basis (the first release will focus on congressional bills);
- Integrate with internal and external systems, such as FDsys and XML authoring tools utilized by external customers (e.g., XMETAL, LEXA); and
- Allow all users (including GPO, congressional, and agency users) to employ XML while maintaining the current functionality available via Microcomp and GPO locator codes.

Question. Does the \$3.5 million cover the entire cost of the system upgrade? Or are further development and implementation costs expected?

Answer. The cost of this multi-year project is currently projected at between \$15 million and \$20 million. To date, \$6.4 million has been appropriated to GPO's Revolving Fund to remain available until expended, and GPO has set aside an additional \$2 million for the same purpose. The addition of the funds requested for fiscal year 2015 will provide us with a little over half of the projected cost. To date, a total of \$2 million has been expended. The CSR will be deployed incrementally on a product by product basis, beginning with congressional bills in the first public release targeted for January 2017.

SECURE CREDENTIALING

Question. GPO produces U.S. passports for the Department of State as well as credentials for other Federal agencies.

Can you provide an overview of GPO's secure credential operations, including how long you have been involved in these operations, the products you produce, and the relationships you have with Federal agencies in producing secure credentials?

Answer. In the wake of 9/11 and the introduction HSPD-12 and related Federal identification requirements, there has been an increase in the Government's need for secure credentials. Based on GPO's long term experience and expertise with the production of the U.S. passport, the establishment of our secure credential capability was endorsed to GPO management by GPO's Inspector General in 2005. GPO's proposal to set up a secure card center within its Security and Intelligent Documents business unit subsequently was approved in fiscal year 2008 by the Joint Committee on Printing, which since then has also approved—on a bipartisan basis—all funding for this program in GPO's annual spending plans. In 2010, we became the only Federal agency certified by the General Services Administration to graphically personalize HSPD-12 credentials. In 2012 the Joint Committee on Printing approved the establishment of a COOP capability for our secure credential operations. While GPO is not the only provider of such requirements for Federal agencies, and while our operation is limited in scope, the volume of work processed by our capability has increased, as the report of the National Academy of Public Administration, *Rebooting the Government Printing Office: Keeping America Informed in the Digital Age* (January 2013), recently concluded.

As Representative Robert Brady recently pointed out in the *Congressional Record* (May 8, 2014; pp. E719–21),

Secure-credential work is firmly within the GPO's statutory authority. GPO has a long history of secure credential work, such as with the manufacture of U.S. passport blanks since 1926. By definition, passports and all other forms of government credentials involve 'printing,' the production of something in printed form. With secure credentials, intricate, multi-color modern printing embedded with anti-counterfeiting features is utterly indispensable to render a document immediately recognizable by handlers as the genuine article and thus inspire the confidence necessary to establish identity, crossings and other purposes.

GPO provides a government-to-government solution to fulfill the requisitions of Federal agencies for secure credentials. Our program is staffed by cleared personnel and backed by a secure supply chain. GPO serves as a card integrator, working closely with private sector providers to obtain the products and services needed to fulfill requisitions submitted by Federal agencies. For several years we have been an accepted member of the Smart Card Alliance, a consortium of private sector companies and Federal agencies including the National Institute for Standards and Technology, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, the Department of Transportation, and the General Services Administration (<http://www.smartcardalliance.org/>). We partner with the private sector for consulting, fabrication, design, materials, and supplies, essentially incorporating the best that industry has to offer into solutions sought by Federal agencies that requisition the work from us.

In this capacity, GPO has served as a valuable resource to a number of Federal agencies, including the U.S. Capitol Police, which relied on us to provide secure law enforcement credentials for the 2009 and 2013 Presidential inaugurations. Other work GPO has performed includes production of the Trusted Traveler family of border crossing cards (NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST), the Global Entry Card, and HSPD-12 card bodies enhanced with security printing for the Department of Homeland Security; the Medicare card used by Puerto Rican beneficiaries for the Department of Health and Human Services; law enforcement credentials for approximately 35 Federal agency inspector general and law enforcement organizations; the DC One card for the District of Columbia Government; a special events badge for the FBI; the family of diplomatic credentials and the border crossing card for the Department of State; and others. In addition to satisfactorily fulfilling Federal agency requisitions for secure credentials, our card production program was endorsed in the recent report of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Throughout the existence of our program, we have been open and transparent about its operation. As noted above, we are a well-known member of the Smart Card Alliance. We are subject to the oversight of the Joint Committee on Printing and our House and Senate legislative oversight and appropriations committees. Additionally, our program has been the subject of oversight by our Office of Inspector General (see for example http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/ig/audits/11-06_AuditReport_Issued_March_31_2011.pdf); the IG's semiannual reports to Congress for several years routinely tracked oversight of the GPO's secure credentials program as a "management challenge" (see for example <http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/ig/semi-annual/11-30-09.pdf>). We have kept the public informed through press releases (see for example <http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/news-media/press/09news19.pdf>, <http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/news-media/press/10news39.pdf>, and <http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/news-media/press/11news60.pdf>), YouTube videos (see for example <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=levIYlqIPy0>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ettaBOW4UEA>, and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQxH1EZA7II>), GPO annual reports to Congress, and other media. Last month, we participated in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Expo held at the Washington Convention Center, where we demonstrated for the public the secure credential work we do with production of the U.S. passport and other credentials.

Question. How are these operations funded?

Answer. GPO provides secure credential products and services on a reimbursable basis through GPO's Revolving Fund. None of the funds for GPO's secure card capability are appropriated by Congress. As required by section 309 of Title 44 of the U.S. Code, GPO's rates for secure credentials are set to recover only the direct and indirect costs of production, including overhead and the cost of investment in the necessary equipment and technology. Total revenues for fiscal year 2013 were approximately \$15 million. By comparison, global revenues for member companies in the Smart Card Alliance in 2013 were approximately \$7.5 billion.

Question. Is GPO the only provider of secure credentials for Federal agencies, and are Federal agencies required to use GPO?

Answer. In hearings before the House Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee for fiscal year 2010, former Public Printer Robert C. Tapella said, "I believe that Federal credentials belong in a federally-owned, federally-operated production environment and not in the private sector. And I think it is an inherently governmental activity" (Hearings, Part II, p. 166). GPO management today does not endorse that position nor would it be practicable. As the National Academy of Public Administration recently concluded, "the GPO is not the sole provider of smart cards [secure credentials]. Agencies may obtain smart cards from private sector vendors as well" (*Rebooting the Government Printing Office*, p. 61). Where GPO's services are concerned, as long as Federal agencies submit a requisition that complies with the relevant provisions of title 44 (certifying that the products requested are authorized by law, necessary to the public business, and backed by the necessary funding), GPO will perform the work. Federal agencies who have contacted GPO to discuss our secure credential capabilities are aware of this fact.

As stated above, as a member organization of the Smart Card Alliance we acknowledge the role of the private sector secure credentials industry in providing products and services to Federal agencies, and we work closely with them in the integration of card components to meet the requirements of products requisitioned from us. We do not compete against private sector companies for secure credential work. GPO provides a limited capability that is available for the use of Federal agencies seeking the provision of services in a government-to-government setting, staffed by cleared personnel, and backed by a secure supply chain. As a postscript, GPO's Security and Intelligent Documents (SID) business unit has one FTE (no sales teams) responsible for addressing inquiries for SID products and services that come from Federal agencies.

Question. What is GPO's process for informing Federal agencies of services provided in this area?

Answer. GPO's secure credential products and services are an intra-governmental option for Federal agencies to consider. GPO does not take the position that use of our capability is required and as noted above we are not the only resource for providing secure credentials. If we are asked to do so, we will respond to inquiries from an agency interested in learning more about our products and services. We do not respond to or take any other action as to Federal agency RFPs soliciting bids for providing secure credentials.

As a public agency we have been transparent in providing information about our secure credential operation, including through our Web site, just as we do for other GPO products and services. However, because secure credentials are a relatively specialized variety of Government document, we have found that work in this area results primarily from word-of-mouth that leads agencies seeking solutions for their secure documents credentials to come to GPO with requests for information. Additionally, our secure credential customers are also customers for other print services, so they are aware of our product and service capabilities. The growth in our secure credential operation has come primarily from agencies that have used our print and other secure credential services previously. We have one staff member who provides information on our secure credential products and capabilities.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE)

Question. GPO's number of employees has been on a decline as technologies have changed.

How many Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) does GPO currently have?

Answer. Through the first 6 months of fiscal year 2014, GPO has utilized an average of 1,838 FTEs. This includes 86 FTE's funded through the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents. The balance of GPO's FTEs are funded through reimbursements to the GPO Revolving Fund.

Question. What is your goal for fiscal year 2014 and will you reach that goal? What is the estimated level of FTEs reflected in your fiscal year 2015 budget request?

Answer. GPO's budget for fiscal year 2014 totals 1,923 FTE's, including 94 FTE's for the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents. Based on results for the first 6 months of fiscal year 2014, GPO will be below the budgeted levels for fiscal year 2014. Actual FTE levels in the business-like Revolving Fund are largely dependent on customer demands for services. GPO's budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 total 1,923 FTE's, including 94 FTE's for the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents.

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BARBARA J. SAPIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE
OF COMPLIANCE

Madam Chairwoman, Senator Hoeven, and members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to present this statement on the Congressional Office of Compliance's (OOC) budget request for fiscal year 2015. I want to thank the subcommittee for its continued support of the OOC and its mission of advancing workplace rights, safety, health and accessibility for congressional employees and members of the public that visit the Capitol.

The Office of Compliance ("OOC") is requesting an appropriation of \$4,020,000 for fiscal year 2015. This is a 3.93 percent increase from fiscal year 2014 and reflects the OOC's immediate need to update our information technology (IT) infrastructure; provide education opportunities to Members, their staffs, and other Legislative Branch employees; and ensure that our safety and health program continues to protect the congressional community.

ENSURING A MODEL WORKPLACE FOR CONGRESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

The OOC continues to be one of the most cost effective investments Congress makes in itself and its personnel. Despite having only 22 full-time equivalents (FTE) positions inclusive of a part-time Board of Directors, the OOC serves the same functions as multiple agencies in the Executive Branch at a fraction of the cost, including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Labor, the Department of Justice (for access for people with disabilities), and the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

These areas of responsibilities for the OOC go beyond creating a model workplace for congressional employees but proactively provide savings to the legislative branch for every dollar expended. For example, training and education programs on workplace protections similar to the ones conducted by the OOC pay dividends far beyond reducing complaints, litigation and settlement costs borne by the Government. Rather, studies have shown that an effective sexual harassment and discrimination training program significantly reduces absenteeism, increases productivity and lowers employee turn-over. In addition, empirical studies have shown that safety and health inspections have a cost-benefit ratio of between \$3 to \$10 of savings for every \$1 invested in improving workplace safety. Further, in fiscal year 2013, the OOC's in-house mediation program resolved over 70 percent of employee claims without the need for costly litigation or hearings.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 REQUEST

In developing this year's budget request, the OOC reviewed its current operations from a zero base to identify opportunities to reduce costs without sacrificing the quality of services to the 30,000 employees of the legislative branch. Between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2014, the OOC's funding had been reduced by approximately \$537,000 which represented over 12 percent of our fiscal year 2010 budget.

Education and Training

While OOC has a statutory mandate to train and educate Congressional employees on their rights and responsibilities under the Act, budget cuts limited our ability to do so. Reductions in this necessary training typically cost the Government more in litigation and personnel costs. In fiscal year 2013, the OOC analyzed the potential savings that came from mandatory training in the executive branch. We saw that, although there was a brief spike in litigation of discrimination claims during the training period, this was followed by a dramatic decline in litigation overall, as mandatory training was implemented, employees were educated about their rights, and management level employees were trained to create model working environments and avoid actions which could give rise to unnecessary litigation. Findings of discrimination also dramatically decreased after the mandate for training was put into effect.

Follow-up studies have also shown that an all-inclusive training approach, where both supervisors and employees are trained together, has the greatest impact on workplace behavior. In fiscal year 2014, we have been able to increase our training budget to strengthen training across campus and for fiscal year 2015, we plan to extend educational opportunities throughout the legislative community. This will include developing web-based modules and expanding in-person training sessions. Our fiscal year 2015 Budget request supports our initial plans to broaden our outreach program.

Information Technology Improvements

A large part of our request for additional funds in fiscal year 2015 is for the development and maintenance of a new case management system. This system will replace an outdated system that is unable to expand to accept many of the current processes used by most Federal and State judicial and administrative forums. For example, the OOC's current data system platform has been unable to keep pace and cannot be modified to accept money saving advancements such as paperless case files and electronic filing. Although relatively novel in 2007 when the current system was first installed, electronic filing is now the standard in Federal and State courts and most administrative forums. Use of these new systems eliminates the waste and costs of multiple copies of pleadings and other litigation documents and significantly reduces uncertainty on issues of filing timeliness. Electronic filing and the migration of litigation records from a paper format to an electronic format is an involved process that includes developing a system that supports digital signatures, allows privacy and public access portals, and facilitates docket and document management.

In view of the increased requests from the congressional community for data and reports on the use of the OOC services, continued reliance on our outdated system seriously hinders our case processing and compromises information management. The current system cannot be modified to meet the increased demands for data and statistics regarding our statutorily mandated programs. The platform of the current system is unreliable in compiling data and issuing accurate reports. This means that in order to provide the reports requested by congressional committees and Member offices or required for the Annual Report, data must be compiled manually. While these manually completed reports contain accurate information, they are time consuming to prepare. Moreover, the current system is not flexible enough to provide for any additional reports that may be needed or requested. In addition, the current platform cannot support the proactive trend analysis that the OOC needs to identify problem areas in legislative branch workplaces early on. Under a new system, the OOC would be able to monitor employee inquiries and complaints in particular employing offices and then work with those entities through training and education to address the issues proactively instead of responding to them in costly litigation. The changes and the development of a new case management system will not only provide for more streamlined service delivery by our office to the congressional community but will also allow cost savings in the long run.

The OOC will require the appropriations allocation discussed in our fiscal year 2015 budget to complete the development and maintenance of a system that is affordable and can be tailored and scaled to the requirements of our mission.

Health and Safety Inspections

The past cuts in funding forced us to significantly reduce Occupational Safety and Health ('OSH') inspector hours. Starting in fiscal year 2012, the OOC developed and instituted a risk-based approach to the biennial OSH inspection. With this approach, OOC inspectors targeted high-risk and high-consequence areas such as machine shops, high voltage areas and child care centers in lieu of more comprehensive inspection of the Capitol campus. While this approach focuses our limited resources, it also requires specialized expertise because such inspections are more complex. Last fiscal year, our risk-based inspections were compromised by reduced inspector hours. We experienced a 6 month delay in completing the inspections for the 112th Congress. We managed to rebuild our inspection team to consist of four contract inspectors (two full time and two part time) and two employee inspectors. These inspectors are working to complete both the 112th and 113th biennial inspections. The same inspectors have been trained to conduct the biennial Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) inspections. After an increase in funding in fiscal year 2014, we are encouraged that we can continue to make progress in our inspections and in fiscal year 2015, we look forward to moving two contract inspector positions to vacant employee positions. This move is expected to save money and help us achieve a stable, experienced workforce. To accomplish this, we are requesting a shift in dollars from 2 year contract funds to 1 year money for staff.

Administrative Dispute Resolution Program

The Office is also requesting minimal funds to ensure that the OOC administrative dispute resolution (ADR) program is at full operational capacity. This program is a critical part of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA). Through mandatory counseling and confidential mediation, and the option of bringing an administrative complaint to the OOC, Congress, in passing the CAA, anticipated that workplace disputes could be handled confidentially at the earliest stages. By its very nature, the program is unpredictable in the number of constituents served and complexity of hearings. Costs can fluctuate greatly over the course of the year. For instance, as of the date of this testimony, complaints filed by congressional employees with our office were up over 40 percent from the last fiscal year. While the number of complaints filed in Federal court during the same time period is about $\frac{1}{3}$ of that number. The ADR program is customer driven and because the number of complaints brought to OOC varies considerably, OOC must maintain the necessary funding to ensure that each complaint can be expeditiously processed.

We have managed to maintain the high level of service for the program through judicious assignment of Hearing Officers, exploration with other Federal agencies on the use of trained Hearing Officers, cross training of existing staff, and bringing mediations in-house. Using senior employees who are highly trained in-house mediators has resulted in significant costs savings to the OOC while still providing unparalleled service. For instance, in fiscal year 2013 our in-house mediators conducted 80 mediations. Of those 80 mediations over 70 percent were resolved without further action by the complainant. This resolution rate for compelled mediation is well above current alternative dispute resolution standards and comes close to mirroring voluntary mediation success rates.

Information Technology

The fiscal year 2015 IT budget request reflects OOC's focus on other IT needs in addition to the case management system, such as improvements to current data systems used in health and safety and ADA inspections, upgrading security to meet current threat levels, enhancement of video conferencing equipment to save travel money for Hearing Officers, and consolidating IT functions.

CONCLUSION

The Office of Compliance and its Board of Directors are proud of the level of services we deliver to the regulated community. As the Executive Director, I want to make sure that our highly professional and talented staff members have the tools they need to perform their statutorily mandated functions. While our budget is small, our mission is large and we work very hard to make the most of the funding that we do receive. Our small size and interrelated missions mean we can ill-afford to underfund one statutorily mandated area and still expect to succeed in the others. We all believe in the mission of the Office of Compliance and work to ensure that we continue to successfully serve the congressional community. We thank the subcommittee again for the opportunity to submit this statement. My staff and I are pleased to answer any questions that members of the subcommittee may have.

[The following are answers to questions submitted by the subcommittee to the Office of Compliance:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO BARBARA J. SAPIN

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATORS JEANNE SHAHEEN AND JOHN HOEVEN

Question. Please describe the deficiencies in the Office of Compliance's (OOC's) current case management system and what capabilities could be added under a new, or upgraded, case management system.

Answer. We obtained our current case management system in 2007 to manage case docketing and correspondence with the parties in dispute resolution proceedings, and to generate mandated annual statistical reports. Based on cost considerations, the OOC purchased a commercial off-the-shelf software program that was adapted slightly to manage the OOC's alternative dispute resolution process from its confidential counseling stage to mediation and ultimately to the administrative hearing process. Shortly after the system came on-line in 2007, its shortcomings and limitations began to reveal themselves as the OOC mission evolved and demands on the system grew. The following are some of those identified problem areas:

Electronic Filing: The OOC's current data system platform cannot be modified to accept cost and time saving advancements such as paperless case files and electronic filing. Today, electronic filing is the standard in Federal and State courts and

most administrative forums. In talking to our stakeholders, they have all asked for increased electronic access. Electronic filing eliminates the need for multiple paper copies of pleadings and other litigation documents, significantly reduces uncertainty on issues of filing timeliness, and reduces postage and archiving costs.

Trend Analysis & Data Management: Despite numerous attempts, we have been unable to modify the current system to meet the increased demands for data and statistics regarding our statutorily mandated programs. The platform of the current system is unreliable in compiling data and issuing accurate reports. This means that in order to provide the data requested by congressional committees and Senate offices or required for the Annual Report, the information must be compiled and verified manually. While these manually completed reports contain accurate information, they are time consuming to prepare. Moreover, the current system is not flexible enough to provide for any additional reports, queries, or cross referencing that may be needed or requested, or for continuous monitoring of expenses related to the dispute resolution program. The current platform cannot support the proactive trend analysis that the OOC wants and stakeholders need to identify problem areas and best practices in legislative branch workplaces.

Cloud-Based Access: The current system is hosted internally by our office, so it is not accessible through the Internet or any other cloud-based system. This in-house hosting requires that OOC employees have two computer terminals—one for internal use of the case management database and another for outside email and Internet access. The internal case management program could not be updated remotely by our vendor for timely support and maintenance; nor could it be expanded to include Internet based e-filing systems. Problems or issues with the program would remain unresolved until the vendor could address them onsite at the OOC.

Proposed System: The OOC is developing an updated case management system that will provide the platform for electronic filing. This system will facilitate secure and private electronic docket and document management. Under an updated system, the OOC will be able to rely on reports that will not only contain accurate statistics on the use of the OOC's services, but will allow us to do reliable trend analysis. Thus, the OOC would be able to monitor employee inquiries and complaints in particular employing offices and then work with those entities through training and outreach to address the issues proactively instead of responding to them later in costly litigation. A new system will also include financial data related to funds spent on contractors in the various stages of mediation and in hearings. This information will be invaluable for future planning and budgeting. Although the OOC cannot control or predict the number of cases that will go to mediation or hearing, this financial data will help staff predict future needs. With the improvements in firewalls, cloud-based security, and other data protection advancements, a new system will provide for secure cloud-based access allowing the OOC to transfer its data to a remotely hosted site accessible via the Internet. This will increase flexibility in maintenance and upkeep by our vendor, facilitate continuation of operations in the event of an emergency, and increase the capacity for OOC staff to telework.

The OOC will require the appropriations allocation discussed in our fiscal year 2015 budget to complete the development and maintenance of an affordable system that can be tailored and scaled to the requirements of our mission.

Question. How do you obtain the services of hearing officers and how are they compensated?

Answer. As required by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), the OOC maintains a list of members of the bar who are retired judges of the Federal courts and current or former Federal administrative judges to serve as hearing officers for administrative cases before the OOC. In developing the list, the Executive Director considers candidates recommended by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and the Administrative Conference of the United States. Recommendations for possible hearing officers have also come from the Department of Labor, the Merit Systems Protection Board, and the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. All of the hearing officers on the list have experience presiding over labor and employment law cases or are experts in technical matters relating to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility or occupational safety and health. Their qualifications and credentials have been thoroughly reviewed by the OOC prior to their inclusion on the list.

When an administrative complaint is filed with the OOC, the Executive Director appoints on a rotational or random basis, one of these judges to serve as the hearing officer for the case. Each hearing officer is compensated for his or her services at an hourly rate negotiated between the OOC and the hearing officer. The hourly rate is determined at the beginning of each fiscal year and the hearing officer's compensation comes from the OOC's budget.

Question. How does OOC allocate and utilize its FTEs considering that OOC's responsibilities cover multiple Federal agencies?

Answer. Many of our employees are dual and triple hatted. For example, our inspectors conduct safety and health inspections and ADA access inspections. Our attorneys serve as investigators, prosecutors, and trainers. The manager of our dispute resolution program also conducts most of our mediation sessions, seeking to resolve claims at an early stage in the process. Our Chief Financial Officer handles our budget and financial matters as well as managing our procurement processes. Our Legislative Affairs Specialist covers public affairs, media communications, and our publications program. Our Accounting/Staff Assistant also handles human resources issues. The Dispute Resolution Counselor manages special projects and serves as our Management Analyst, in addition to counseling covered employees. Our Deputy Executive Directors for the Senate and House of Representatives not only have the statutory responsibilities directly related to Senate and House activities, but they also have specific responsibilities for processing cases filed with the OOC. We contract for hearing officers, information technology support, outside mediators, and inspectors as workload demands and funding permits.

We follow existing best practices, as identified in the Congressional Accountability Act and elsewhere. For example, we apply the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards from the Department of Labor and the ADA public access regulations from the Department of Justice. We make adjustments for congressional workplaces where it makes sense to do so. We leverage technology for efficiencies, such as using inexpensive or free software for note taking and map drawing during inspections. We are developing a new case management system that will efficiently track case activity, will support electronic filing, and will provide data for effective training and outreach.

Question. What services do you provide to Senate members and their staff?

Answer. The Administrative Dispute Resolution program provides advice, information, confidential counseling and mediation, quality and timely administrative hearings, and appellate review to Senate members and their staff. The OOC also provides training on discrimination and retaliation issues for covered offices and employees, including Senate offices. The CAA mandates that we provide this training to the offices, but there is no mandate that staff or Members attend our training courses. So, we must be proactive in reaching the offices on Capitol Hill and in the States. We can contact employing offices and employees through the Senate e-mail system and by direct e-mail when we have addresses, and through content provided on our Web site. We reach out to Senate offices to arrange training and respond to requests initiated by the offices. We also serve as a resource for legislative branch safety and health professionals who have questions about how to comply with a standard or how to design a safety procedure or program. We are transparent with our ADA public access inspections, inviting the AOC to accompany us as we check for barriers for staff and visitors with disabilities on the Capitol campus. Our OSH biennial inspections provide a critical measure of safety for workers in high hazard areas. We also provide technical assistance to unions and employing offices with labor-management relations questions, and assist them in resolving their unfair labor practice issues.

Question. Your statement indicates that in fiscal year 2014, you are increasing training to the covered community, what does that include and what do you plan to do in fiscal year 2015 to expand this training?

Answer. In fiscal year 2014, the OOC prioritized training to the covered community as a proactive measure to lower claims and improve workplace conditions by expanding its educational initiatives for employees and managers. These measures are proven to lower claims and make for a more productive workforce. This includes working directly with various legislative entities to develop and implement training based on their operational needs and areas of identified concern for the OOC. For example, this year the OOC began working with the United States Capitol Police (USCP) on various training projects, including training the USCP's Human Resources staff on provisions relating to reasonable accommodations under the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act as applied by the CAA, and by presenting informational briefings at the officer's morning roll call. In addition, we have revised and enhanced our district staff training for both Senate and House employees through the Congressional Research Service and are actively working with individual committees and Member offices to target training to these audiences.

For fiscal year 2015, we intend to make greater use of our current outreach tools to advertise our training services and to stress the benefits of training to offices and instrumentalities. This includes working with the House Learning Center to advertise new training opportunities and to conduct joint training to expand our reach to House staff. We hope to do the same with the Senate. Further, we have modified

an attorney position to include significant instructor duties in order to expand our in-person training capabilities to Member offices and committee staff.

With additional funding, we will be able to develop and offer Web-based content including Webinar training which can reach previously underserved State offices and provide training to legislative personnel wherever they are. Our new case management system will also allow us to monitor trends in issues coming to our office and identify particular topics and best practices that we should emphasize in training. This data-driven training approach is a proactive strategy to address problems before costly and disruptive claims are made.

We will also continue our very successful Distinguished Speaker series which provides an alternative learning opportunity for congressional staff. Previous topics have included women's equality in the workplace and addressing "hidden disabilities" under the Americans with Disabilities Act. These events have also served as an excellent opportunity to further advertise the services of our office and promote workplace rights under the CAA.

Question. Other Federal agencies and legislative branch entities are moving to Web-based training as both a cost-effective and convenient tool for training delivery. What steps is OOC taking to move in this direction?

Answer. Research has shown that Web-based instruction, correctly implemented, can have a greater impact than most other modes of learning, including in-person training. Although Web-based training can save agencies thousands in training costs over years, the initial start-up costs are quite high. Initial costs include the development of Web-based training modules, licensing of software, and obtaining the necessary technology infrastructure to host such training. As Web-based training development will require a significant investment, without additional training funds, the implementation this type of training will have to be done incrementally. To work around the resource issue, the OOC has attempted to partner with the Federal Bar Association to use its Webinar equipment, but we are still searching for a way to reach our respective audiences through the same programming. We are currently exploring ways in which we can work with Senate and House training/education offices to develop e-learning platforms. We will make whatever progress we can within our budget and will continue to search for other partners.

Ultimately, the OOC's strategic goal is to establish a Web-based program that will allow both module learning on specific topics and live Webinars. Webinars allow for live instruction to remote offices including currently underserved State and district offices. These programs allow a presenter to not only teach a topic but also to interact with participants in real-time through a virtual chat function. As a supplement to these Webinars, the OOC hopes to host module learning that can be accessed 24 hours a day by users from either their office computers or from their home devices. These platforms have the added benefit of being available to all congressional offices and legislative branch agencies.

Lastly, the OOC continues to develop and offer in-person training to congressional offices. This training has recently included individual Member and various Committee offices across campus and has been positively received. While in-person training presents an opportunity for OOC staff to interact with the Capitol community and to hear the concerns of individuals across campus regarding workplace rights, it is difficult from a resource and logistic standpoint to bring busy staff together. As a result, we view this kind of training as only one piece of a larger outreach and educational strategy.